

# Valuing Northern Libraries

## Community Report

### Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library

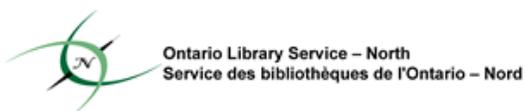
## Social Return on Investment

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## Executive Summary

In 2015, Wikwemikong's contribution to the library was \$15,000. Application of the SROI Measurement Tool to 2015 data demonstrated this investment resulted in \$259.45 of economic benefit per resident, and \$714.08 per household. The library is open 1,569 hours per year for the year evaluated, yielding a minimum impact of \$80.05 for each open hour in 2015. Through the application of these calculations it is apparent that the Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library yields at minimum \$844,753.70 in total economic benefit and a \$56.32 social return on investment for each dollar of its base band funding. Expressed as a percentage, this amounts to 5,632%. These calculations demonstrate the monetary value of the library's cultural, social, cognitive, health, and economic applications as well as its contributions to community cohesion and an improved overall quality of life.

Despite clear evidence of economic spinoff of library services, not all of the impact can be quantified in terms of its monetary value. Anecdotes that illustrate the intangible benefits that libraries provide to their communities also need to be included. By demonstrating the intangible effects on their communities as well as their considerable SROI, libraries can demonstrate how they drive community and economic development across the North.

Based on a review of relevant literature, focus groups, consultation with steering committee members and site visits, NORDIK designed a measurement tool to encompass the many diverse and unique roles that public libraries play in the North as community hubs. Seven key areas, or sectors, were identified as components of libraries' benefit to their communities, namely: Cultural Integrity and Regional Identity, Social Inclusion, Cognitive and Literacy, Health and Wellness, Engaged Citizens and Safer Communities, Entertainment and Enjoyment, and Economic Development. In collaboration with the pilot sites, three indicators were chosen within each sector that best reflect how libraries' operations and expenditures contribute to each respective area. The data for each is typically already collected by most libraries or is otherwise accessible through other library data collections methods.

## 1.0 Why We Value Northern Libraries

Public libraries serve their communities as centres of information, art, technology, history, and community life. Libraries compete for scarce public funding along with other community institutions.

Small and rural Northern libraries are increasingly challenged to explain their value in the community amid mounting municipal and band council priorities. In addition, funding organizations request that grant applications identify outcomes that will be achieved through grants. As this becomes more prevalent, small, rural, and remote libraries are under pressure to define and use outcome based analytics. Small northern libraries need the capacity to define, assess, and report on outcomes or return on investment.

For the first time, we are studying the Social Return on Investment (SROI) in Northern Ontario's public libraries. That is to say, how much do our communities benefit through its local support of a public library. In addition to economic benefit, this study also examined library-based benefits in the areas of literacy, cognitive development, citizen engagement, and health and well-being.

There are no studies specific to small and rural Northern Ontario public libraries that provide the tools necessary to demonstrate the return on the investment from a public library. The Valuing Northern Libraries project created a measurement toolkit with corresponding online training.

The relative value of remote libraries and the financial challenges they face must be measured against the economic reality of the North. For example, successive Nutritious Food Basket studies have confirmed the cost of basic goods in Northwestern Ontario is double the cost of the same goods in Toronto. Based on the difference between the Nutritious Food Basket in Toronto and individual northern communities, a premium value was calculated and used in this measurement toolkit to acknowledge the access and benefits to services provided by public libraries in Northern First Nation, francophone, and rural communities and which may otherwise be unavailable.

This community report is a narrative report based upon the results of the SROI Indicator Template and the focus group discussions. The tables are also derived from the SROI. Thus, all Ontario public libraries are able to duplicate this report in their own communities.

## 1.1 Community Profile – Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library

Wikwemikong Unceded First Nation is a community founded by an alliance called the Three Fires Confederacy, allying the Odawa, Ojibway and Pottawatomi Nations. The Odawa were the first settled inhabitants of the area with three Pottawatomi families settling in 1832, and joined in the 1850s by Ojibway peoples. Oral history of the region outlines that Manitoulin Island was considered a sacred site by the members of the Three Fires Confederacy, and although all member nations used the Island for ceremonies and visited regularly, no one actually lived there year round. As fears arose that European settlers might lay claim to the land, the Three Fires Confederacy leadership sent community members there to protect their rights to the Island. The Wikwemikong First Nation has never signed a treaty with the government of Canada.

Wikwemikong Unceded First Nation is located on the most eastern tip of Manitoulin Island, located in Northern Ontario and covers a land area of 414 square kilometres. It has a population of 2,500 according to the 2016 Canada Census, down -3.5 percent from 2011.

Figure 1: Map of Wikwemikong Unceded First Nation



Wikwemikong is governed by a Chief and 12 Councillors. The community has a well-established economic development department which also manages a Local Delivery Mechanism, providing employment and training to band members and employers. A Comprehensive Community Plan guides the community's development over the next several years.

The library is attached to the local High School, and has a strong community focus. Currently, staff at the library is working towards strengthening its relationship with the elders of the community, linking youth to the elders, and to supporting a literacy program to assist with the current low levels of literacy and employment in the community.

Open Monday to Friday the Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library has 2 full-time staff members and 3 summer student positions. Access to the library is free for all residents of Wikwemikong.

## 2.0 Valuing the Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library

The Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library actively contributes to all seven aspects of individual, organizational, and community capacity building: 1) Cultural Integrity and Regional Identity; 2) Social Inclusion; 3) Cognitive and Literacy Development; 4) Health and Well-being; 5) Engaged Citizens and Safer Communities; 6) Enjoyment and Entertainment; and 7) Economic Development.

### 2.1 Cultural Integrity and Regional Identity

The Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library supports the cultural integrity and identify of the region in many diverse ways, focusing specifically on its indigenous culture and re-connecting the youth with the local elders through a wide variety of programming, while ensuring that people from all walks of life feel welcome and engaged.

Both the physical space of the library and the services it offers reach and support a generational breadth of people. There is no fee for local membership, and often food is offered to the patrons free of charge. It is a year round destination for those living in the community of Wikwemikong.

The library offers supports and promotes local culture, providing programming around First Nation Public Library Week, First Nations Communities Read, National Day, and Kwewag Day. With its large collection of Ojibway language literature and programming that is often focused directly toward building social and cultural capacity, as well as literacy skills development, the library is seen as an important cultural hub. The library offers Ojibway language and culture books for all levels of literacy, a language application for digital media, and cultural specific programming like hoop dancing and indigenous crafting sessions. As Wikwemikong is surrounded by water, the library lends out life jackets to community members.

Figure 2: Cultural Integrity

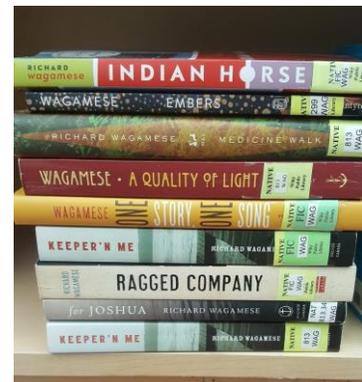


Table 1: Cultural Integrity & Regional Identity Benefit

1. <b>Cultural Integrity &amp; Regional Identity Indicators</b>	<b>Economic Benefit</b>
Economic benefit of special collections and other materials related to culture and history of area (incl. snowshoes, fishing rods, GPS, and Indigenous, French, and Immigrant languages)	\$18,702.00
Economic benefit of the promotion of local cultural and historical events, programs, advertising space and information services about local area	\$3,780.00
Economic benefit of cultural events	\$10,680.00
<i>Total economic benefit of Cultural Integrity &amp; Regional Identity indicators</i>	\$33,162.00

The economic benefit generated by the Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library in 2015 through its services and activities related to cultural integrity and regional identity totals \$33,162.00 based on the indicators.

## 2.2 Social Inclusion

Libraries are key community sites for fostering social inclusion, providing services that can serve to equalize skill levels and foster relationships of mutual support and trust (see Rao 2012; Rankin 2012; Rosenfeldt 2006). The Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library has endeavoured to ensure that its services are accessible, welcoming and inclusive of a diversity of peoples.

Many patrons know that they are more than just another face to the staff at the Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library. The library is known for providing a safe and welcoming space for people of all backgrounds. It provides an important, casual opportunity for social interaction, and the youth have the benefit of accessing it daily while attending the connected high school. The library is well known for assisting with government forms and applications, as there are few other options for help in the small community.

The library offers delivery of books and laptops to the home-bound, providing much needed interaction with community and materials. Nurses from the local nursing facility also pick up books to read to patients in care.

Special resources are available for the visually impaired and others living with disabilities, e.g., audio books, e-bios, CDs, DVDs, large print books, graphic novels, and talking books. Cost of these materials may be a barrier for a private citizen, particularly those who may have faced increased economic barriers due to their ability status.

Membership is free to local residents. A large number of residents do not have reliable access to the internet in their homes. The broadband internet connection offered by the

library is crucial for the public to access web-based information or services. The fact that internet and Wi-Fi services do not require a membership card makes them more accessible for summer residents and tourists. Likewise, membership cards are not always required for programming or on-site use of collections, ensuring everyone can access the library as a shared public commons.

Figure 3: Social Inclusion



Table 2: Economic benefit of Social Inclusion

<b>2. Social Inclusion</b>	<b>Economic Benefit</b>
Economic benefit of accessible collections, (i.e., Braille, large print books, Talking Books on CD, etc.)	\$10,618.00
Economic benefit of inter-library loans	\$435.46
Economic benefit of internet access	\$9,150.00
<i>Total economic benefit of Social Inclusion indicators</i>	\$20,203.46

The economic benefit generated by the Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library in 2015 through services and activities related to social inclusion totals \$20,203.46 based on the indicators. The library provides a safe place for people to socialize, making Wikwemikong First Nation a more inclusive and equitable place to live, work and play.

### 2.3 Cognitive and Literacy Development

Recent research shows that adults with low literacy levels have more health problems, earn less and live shorter lives than other adults (Canadian Council of Learning 2010). The Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library addresses literacy and cognitive development in a variety of ways, ranging from the provision of materials that cater to

multiple different forms of literacy to programming that creates positive associations with reading and literacy itself.

The Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library collection of literary resources (fiction and non-fiction) is available to all community members, and in the case of the seniors' homes, is delivered right to the door. The library offers materials and adaptive technologies that facilitate literature and media access.

Figure 4: Cognitive and Literacy Development



The library provides resources to be readily used or adapted by patrons. High school libraries, for instance, seldom have all the necessary information for students to complete projects, and the supplementation provided by the public library system is invaluable in the education process, particularly considering the availability of resources through inter-library loan services. Resources are also accessible electronically, fostering and promoting computer and research literacy.

Literacy promotion also takes place in several indirect ways. The resources described above, for instance, are of particular use and interest to young families, offering access to a wide breadth of information and research sources that would be prohibitive to any family without access to a public library. A summer reading program for youth as well as the other youth focused programming promotes literacy engagement. Other programs include homework help, back-to-school programming, and a teen graffiti program.

Table 3: Cognitive & Literacy Development Benefit

3. Cognitive & Literacy Development	Economic Benefit
Economic benefit of children and youth circulation (incl. books, audio books, DVDs, databases and other materials directed at this age)	\$42,480.00
Economic benefit of children and youth programming	\$5,715.00
Economic benefit of class instruction at a library or a school	\$4,750.00
<i>Total economic benefit of Cognitive and Literacy Development indicators</i>	\$52,945.00

The economic benefit generated by the Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library in 2015 through its services and activities related to cognitive and literacy development totals \$52,945.00 based on the indicators.

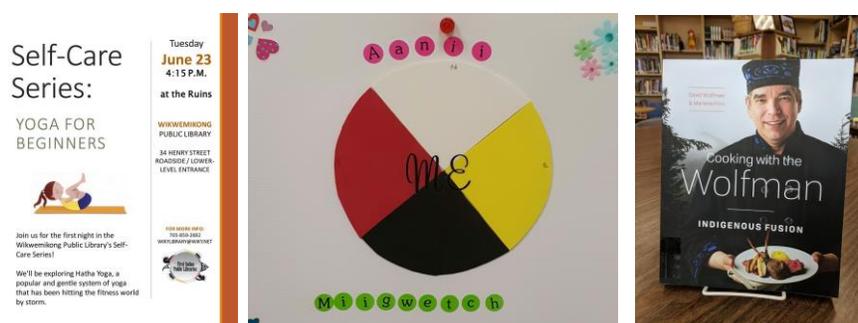
## 2.4 Health and Wellness

Research (Brewster, 2014) reveals a strong connection between the services of public libraries and the health of their patrons, particularly serving those who experience mental and physical health challenges. In Northern and rural communities, libraries also serve as a major source of health information (Wathen & Harris, 2007) and libraries have also made considerable contributions to wellbeing through environmental interventions (e.g., Antonelli, 2008).

The Wikwemikong Public Library offers a number of environmental provisions and interventions. Its book collections include resources on recycling and of the Ojibway language and culture. The library also recycles books that are brought in by community members.

The cultivation of networks of care also promotes health and wellness within the community. Nurses and volunteer high school students, for instance, take and share books from the library to individuals in long term and senior care. Such initiatives reduce isolation for these individuals, improving their quality of life and thereby potentially improving their overall health.

Figure 5: Health & Wellness Programs



Family health, cohesion, and maintenance are among the many contributions the Wikwemikong Public Library adds to the community’s social fabric. Its space hosts the ‘Healthy Babies, Healthy Children’ program for families to socialize and engage with one another. The library offered programs such as healthy heart, yoga, breast cancer awareness, holiday health nutrition eating, and heart and fitness. A unique feature of this library is that it always offers food to its patrons. This is essential for those community members with limited means.

Table 4: Health & Wellness Benefit

<b>4. Health &amp; Wellness</b>	<b>Economic Benefit</b>
Economic benefit of health-related programming delivered at the library	\$600.00
Economic benefit of Health and Wellness related collection (incl. books, e-books, DVD's)	\$8,600.00
Economic benefit of in-library information requests	\$3,050.00
<i>Total economic benefit of Health and Wellness indicators</i>	\$12,250.00

The economic benefit generated by the Wikwemikong Public Library in 2015 through its services and activities related to health and wellness total \$12,250.00 based on the indicators.

**2.5 Engaged Citizens and Safer Communities**

Previous research has identified the considerable impact that libraries have demonstrated in strengthening community relationships between individuals, families and other groups, by developing a shared sense of place and community while contributing to crime prevention through social development (Rankin, 2012). Promoting and improving community dialogue and understanding was one of the most consistent outcomes noted in the 2012 study in Yorkshire, England. Early interventions, provision of meeting spaces, and community partnerships all contribute to building community capacity and the ability of library patrons to engage in public life and access government services (Hanna, 2012; Ulvik, 2010; Rankin, 2012).

Developing relationships as discussed in other sections of this report is also important with respect to developing engaged citizenship and building safer communities. Through various programming, workshops, and accidental interaction, patrons have an opportunity to create and develop relationships with a broader cross-section of the population at the library than they might ordinarily meet in their daily lives. The library’s meeting space supports the work of local citizens in strengthening the social economy and the community’s overall resiliency.

Figure 6: Engaged Citizens



The library helps foster relationships within the community by promoting community events and through their website and the community's website. Library space is used by elders and community groups to promote events and increase public awareness about a variety of topics, thus creating networking opportunities and building relationships. The Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library is seen as a community hub for a broad cross-section throughout the community. Services and early interventions for those at risk of being in conflict with the law help to create stronger, safer community.

Table 5: Engaged Citizens & Safer Communities Benefit

5. Engaged Citizens & Safer Communities	Economic Benefit
Economic benefit of library membership	\$525,987.00
Economic benefit of volunteer hours (incl. adults, board members, community hours and student coops)	\$2,097.28
Economic benefit of community development workshops (incl. community development workshops; newcomer programs; technology, social media and computer literacy workshops)	\$475.00
<i>Total economic benefit of Engaged Citizens and Safer Communities indicators</i>	\$528,559.28

The economic benefit generated by the Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library in 2015 through its services and activities related to promoting engaged citizenship and safer communities totals \$528,559.28 based on the indicators selected.

## 2.6 Entertainment and Enjoyment

In 2014, the Canadian Library Association reported that libraries provide enjoyment and entertainment to their patrons in two important ways: 1) through their ever-changing collections of books, CDs, DVDs, eBooks, audio books, and a wide range of other materials, and 2) as a place to hang out. For populations living in Northern, rural, and First Nation communities, both of these functions may be of even greater importance than in larger urban centres.

The Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library's entertainment initiatives concentrate particularly on literature. The library hosts First Nation and Canadian author reads, creative writing workshops, as well as indigenous crafting workshops like beadwork and hoop dancing. The coffee house atmosphere of the library allows for space to showcase artists and local crafts, while also hosting weekly arts programs throughout the year.

Figure 7: Entertainment and Enjoyment



Table 6: Entertainment & Enjoyment Benefit

6. Entertainment & Enjoyment	Economic Value
Economic benefit of Adult Circulation (All materials)	\$15,357.70
Economic benefit of Adult & Seniors programming and services (incl. cooking, knitting, yoga etc.)	\$15,860.00
Economic benefit of library visits	\$17,040.00
<i>Total economic benefit of Enjoyment and Entertainment indicators</i>	\$48,257.70

The economic benefit generated by the Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library in 2015 through its services and activities related to entertainment and personal enjoyment totals \$48,257.70 based on the indicators selected.

## 2.7 Economic Development

Public libraries boost the economy of their local communities, not only through the provision of direct jobs and spin-off jobs (MPI, 2013) but also by the role libraries play in facilitating entry into the labour market (Rao, 2012). Other advantages include access to Wi-Fi services, providing office space and equipment for home-based businesses and local entrepreneurs, as well as supporting the local economy by purchasing goods and services in the community.

The Wikwemikong Public Library's most direct investment in the local economy comes in the form of its 2 full-time staff. The skills that students gain while working or volunteering within the library contribute to their future employment opportunities, as well as building valuable networks within the community through direct daily interaction with patrons.

The library's services, particularly access to broadband internet, help to support businesses and tourism retention. Small business owners are able to use library services, including internet access as well as faxes and scanning, to save on their own expenses and expand their capacity. Small business owners vacationing in the area are also able to access internet services and maintain a connection to their business, making them more likely to return to the area. The ISO management system being used helps the library to track usage and improve the services it provides.

Online services available at the library enable patrons to access government services, many of which require accessing forms or submitting information online. This increases the accessibility of such services and helps residents access a variety of different supports, including support for businesses, employment insurance claims, health travel grants, and more. The library also serves as an after-hours employment and training service, as the hours of the library better suit the needs of community members.

Table 7: Economic Development Benefit

<b>7. Economic Development</b>	<b>Economic Benefit</b>
Economic benefit of funds leveraged from outside the community (incl. library-specific funding, e.g., capacity building, pay equity, provincial operating grants).	\$29,597.00
Economic benefit of self-generated revenues (incl. contracts, donations, employment funding, fees, grants, room rental) Project funding available only through application	\$45,078.00
Economic benefit of Employment, Training and Development	\$48,759.40
<i>Total economic benefit of Economic Development indicators</i>	\$123,434.40

The economic benefit generated by the Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library in 2015 through its services and activities related to economic development totals \$123,434.40 based on the indicators.

### 3.0 The Social Return on Investment of the Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library

Social Return on Investment (SROI) is a term originating from return on investment (ROI), as used by traditional investors. It describes the social impact of a business or non-profit's operations in dollar terms, relative to the investment (Lingane, 2004).

The social return on investment assesses three main areas: direct spending, direct tangible benefits, and indirect tangible benefits.

The SROI of the Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library cannot be fully captured by economic indicators. In fact, perhaps the most significant value of the library is serving as a community hub, which contributes to the community's overall health and well-being, cohesiveness and engagement. This is necessarily under-rated when reported in primarily quantifiable terms. Nevertheless, the SROI calculation is a valuable exercise in that it reveals some aspects of library service that would otherwise remain hidden from the general public, policy-makers and funders. Table 8 indicates the total of each of the seven benefit areas of the framework.

Table 8: Total Benefits

<b>Totaling Indicators</b>	<b>Economic Benefit</b>
1. Cultural Integrity & Regional Identity	\$33,162.00
2. Social Inclusion	\$20,203.46
3. Cognitive & Literacy	\$52,945.00
4. Health & Wellness	\$12,250.00
5. Engaged Citizens & Safer Communities	\$528,559.28
6. Entertainment & Enjoyment	\$48,257.70
7. Economic Development	\$123,434.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$818,811.84</b>
<b>Premium Value for underserved area<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>1.03</b>
<b>Total Economic Benefit of the 7 indicator areas</b>	<b>\$844,753.70</b>

Once the totals of the seven indicators are tabulated, the SROI may be calculated as shown in Table 9.

<sup>1</sup> The Premium Value calculation for the underserved area is based on the percentage difference between the cost of a Nutritious Food Basket in Toronto and the locale. Figures are obtained through regional public health units.

Table 2: SROI for the Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library

Social Return on Investment Data		Economic Benefit
Economic Benefit	Economic Benefit of the 7 indicator areas (Table 8)	\$818,811.84
Total Economic Benefit	Economic Benefit x Premium Value for locale	\$844,753.70
Benefit per Resident	Total Economic Benefit divided by number of residents in catchment area	\$259.70
Impact per household	Total Economic Impact divided by the number of households in catchment area	\$714.08
Impact of an Open Hour	Total economic benefit of the circulation of all materials for all ages, plus the total economic benefit of all programs and services, plus the economic benefit of internet access, divided by the total number of open library hours of all branches, not including statutory holidays.	\$80.05
Total Social Return on Investment	Total Economic Benefit divided by the municipality's operating grant	\$56.32
Total Social Return on Investment as a Percentage	Total Social Return on Investment expressed as a percentage	5,632%

In 2015 the monthly cost of the Nutritious Food Basket for the Sudbury and District Health Unit area, which encompasses the Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library was \$874.00, whereas Toronto's monthly cost was \$847.16. The difference represents a premium value of 1.03 as an underserved area. This premium value is used in this measurement toolkit to acknowledge the access and benefits to services provided by public libraries in Northern First Nation, francophone, and rural communities and which may otherwise be unavailable. Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library's catchment area serves a population of 3,256 residents, comprised of 1,183 households. The library is open 1,569 hours per year yielding a minimum impact of \$80.05 for each open hour. In 2015, Wikwemikong First Nation's contribution to the library was \$45,710.

Through the application of these calculations it is apparent that the Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library yields at minimum \$327,017.34 in total economic benefit and a \$7.15 return on its base municipal funding. Expressed as a percentage, every dollar invested by the municipality in the public library yields 715% in economic benefit. These calculations demonstrate the monetary value of the library's cultural, social, cognitive, health, and economic benefits as well as its contributions to community cohesion and an improved overall quality of life.

Despite very evident economic spinoff of library services across each of the sectors measured in the pilot sites, not all of the benefits to community life that libraries offer can be quantified in terms of monetary value. Consequently, future applications of these

measurement tools should supplement quantifying indicators with anecdotes that illustrate the direct benefits that libraries provide to their communities, as has been exemplified in the preceding pages and past research (MPI, 2013; Sawyer, 1996) on quantifying the value of libraries.

In terms of its SROI, the Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library is integral to its community's life and future development. It has demonstrated its capacity as a driver of community development and ability to maximize the local benefit of its funding.

## Appendix A: Methodology and Framework

### Methodology

Ontario Library Service – North (OLS – North) received two years of funding through the Ontario Libraries Capacity Fund (OLCF) – Research and Innovation grant to develop a tool to measure the value of small libraries in Northern Ontario to their communities.

OLS – North contracted NORDIK Institute, a community-based research institute at Algoma University to measure the benefits that 121 libraries across Northern Ontario provide to their communities. Six pilot sites, chosen for their diverse geography and demographics, volunteered to participate in the design and testing of a tool for measuring the SROI of northern libraries. Dryden, Kenora, and Rainy River were the three public libraries from Northwestern Ontario. In Northeastern Ontario, the pilot communities are Powassan, Temiskaming Shores, and Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve. Rainy River serves the smallest population (2,175) while Kenora has the largest population of the pilot sites (15,348). These communities are predominantly English speaking with small groups of French, Ojibway, Oji-Cree, and Cree speaking people. Librarians from these pilot communities served on the Steering Committee to guide this process.

NORDIK Institute submitted a written literature review to the Steering Committee prior to site visits. This draft revealed seven distinct areas for assessment, identifying that public libraries act as community hubs providing services and programs that reach far beyond the now-outdated concept of libraries as mere storehouses of books. Focus groups within the pilot sites confirmed that the valuing of public libraries in Northern and rural settings required that the measurement tool reach well beyond circulation materials to encompass the many diverse and unique roles of public libraries. Based on a review of the literature, site visits, and input from the Steering Committee, seven areas, or sectors, were identified as key components of libraries' benefit to their communities: Cultural Integrity and Regional Identity, Social Inclusion, Cognitive and Literacy, Health and Wellness, Engaged Citizens and Safer Communities, Entertainment and Enjoyment, and Economic Development.

NORDIK designed a measurement tool in collaboration with the pilot sites to measure Social Return on Investment. Three indicators were chosen within each sector that best reflect how libraries' operations and expenditures contribute to each respective area. The measurement tool was tested in the pilot communities.

The *Valuing Northern Libraries Toolkit* contains background information to the study, and data collection methodology including indicator formulae, enabling each library to conduct its own Social Return on Investment. The Social Return on Investment is used to describe the social impact of a business or non-profit's operations in dollar terms,

relative to the investment required to create that benefit and exclusive of its financial return to investors (Lingane, 2004).

A measurement framework outlined in Figure 7 below was designed, based on the research conducted for the study.

Figure 8: Measurement Framework



## Developing Evaluation Indicators

An Indicator is a quantifiable measure used to monitor progress or benefit in a given area or sector. The same number of indicators is measured in each of the seven sectors for the purpose of demonstrating the equivalent value of each sector in the overall calculation of its Social Return on Investment.

Many public library services and activities could arguably demonstrate benefits in multiple sectors. For example, a program funded by the Ministry of Health might be placed in the Health and Wellness sector, even though it may have implications for cognitive and literacy development, or another sector. This study has relied on the preferences of the pilot sites to identify the placement of indicators within each of the seven sectors.

The indicators have been selected based on data that is collected by most libraries through its automation system or is otherwise available through other library data collections methods.

## Defining Outcome Measures

1. Small libraries have a reliable and user friendly tool to measure their benefit to the community.
2. Small libraries will gain an understanding of Return on Investment and value measurement.
3. Small libraries will have a social and economic measure of their community benefit that will support discussions with key stakeholders and funders about the value their library brings to the community.

## Focus Groups and Steering Committee Meetings

NORDIK conducted a total of 7 focus groups: the first was with the Steering Committee members and OLS - North staff on May 16, 2016. Subsequent focus groups were conducted over the period of June 1, to June 22, 2016. The focus groups were facilitated electronically by NORDIK staff, and asked participants to identify what they considered to be the 'value of their public library to their community'. The focus groups reinforced the need for a measurement tool that could determine value across the broad spectrum of areas in which public libraries contribute.

## Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library Pilot Site Visit

NORDIK staff visited the Wikemikong Public Library on December 1, 2016. The goals of the visit were as follows:

- To obtain feedback on both the design and content of the draft toolkit, i.e., clarity, level of user-friendliness, 'look', etc.
- To obtain direct feedback on the proposed methodology for establishing the value of public libraries, including assessing indicators and formulae for measuring the libraries' value and eliciting suggestions of alternative indicators and/or formulae
- To obtain greater insight into how the library responds to its community's needs
- To develop a model 'report' that other libraries in Northern Ontario may use to guide their own study and report on their public library's value to its community.

NORDIK staff spent approximately five hours in discussion with the librarian of the Wikwemikong Public Library, obtaining substantial feedback on the above. Additional time was spent observing library operations and patrons during open hours. Key comments contributed to revisions to the Toolkit, as well as greater insight into how the library responds to its unique community and how it reflects its role as a community hub.

## Appendix B: Detailed Indicator Charts

Please see the attached SROI Indicator Template for Wikwemikong First Nation Public Library.

## Glossary of Terms

**Children:** 0 - 12 years of age

**Community Development:** Libraries may provide a variety of programming that addresses community capacity building, community empowerment or organizing, municipal planning or municipal cultural planning, forums for public input and participatory planning, community-based planning and group work, or that brings together representatives from a number of sectors for development and planning purposes.

**Economic Multiplier:** Multipliers are used by economists to estimate the impact of investment or job creation on the economy of a community or region. They are developed from complex mathematical models which identify the interrelationship between spending/job creation in one sector (e.g., an industrial employer) on another (e.g., household) (The Importance of Economic Multipliers, Fact Sheet-04-59, University of Nevada, Reno, 2004).

**Indicators:** An Indicator is a quantifiable measure used to monitor progress or impact in a given area or sector.

**Premium Value:** The total value - economic and quality of life – that rural, Northern, Indigenous and francophone libraries provide may be difficult to fully ascertain, however, should be recognized as a significant factor in attracting and retaining citizens and investment. A premium value has been assigned in this toolkit to acknowledge such access and benefit. Such premium value is calculated by applying the percentage difference of the cost of the Nutritious Good Food Box<sup>2</sup> in local communities versus such cost in the City of Toronto. Community Nutritious Food Basket costs can be located through regional public health units<sup>3</sup>.

**Social Return on Investment (SROI):** Social Return on Investment (SROI) is a term “originating from return on investment (ROI), as used by traditional investors. It describes the social impact of a business or non-profit’s operations in dollar terms, relative to the investment required to create that impact and exclusive of its financial return to investors” (Lingane 2004). The social return on investment assesses three main areas: direct spending, direct tangible benefits, and indirect tangible benefits.

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<sup>2</sup> Health Canada, Nutritious Food Basket (<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/basket-panier/index-eng.php>)

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, Public Health Units

(<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx>)

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## **Appendix A: Detailed Indicator Charts**

Please see attached SROI Indicator Spreadsheet.

[Printing and attaching the detailed SROI Indicator Charts is optional]